

Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 OMB-01 EB-07 ACDA-05 /073 W

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R 131613Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3384

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 2223

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, PL, UR, BE

SUBJECT: HIGH-LEVEL BELGIAN TOURISM TO THE EAST

REF: BRUSSELS 902

1. WITH MIXED FEELINGS, BELGIAN GOVERNMENT IS ABOUT TO SEND OUT ITS TOP PERSONALITIES IN A SERIES OF SORTIES INTO THE COMMUNIST EAST. THE LABEL ATTACHED TO UPCOMING VISITS TO POLAND, CHINA AND POSSIBLY THE USSR IS "GOODWILL" WITH BELGIUM INTENDING TO AVOID ANY KIND OF SUBSTANTIVE ENGAGEMENTS OR DISCUSSIONS.

2. ON APRIL 7 PRIME MINISTER TINDEMANS, ACCOMPANIED BY FOREIGN MINISTER VAN ELSLANDE, WILL VISIT POLAND. FOREIGN MINISTRY SAYS SCHEDULE IS NOT YET SET, BUT BELGIANS HOPE TO KEEP IT TO TWO FULL DAYS AND "AS TOURISTIC AS POSSIBLE". MINISTRY SOURCE SAID VISIT IS STRICTLY POLISH INITIATIVE WHICH WARSAW HAS PRESSED WITH
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GREAT PERSISTENCE. BELGIANS ARE BRACING FOR A HARD

POLISH SELL ON TRADE AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES,
NONE OF WHICH LOOKS AT FIRST GLANCE ENTICING TO BELGIANS.

3. ABOUT SAME TIME MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE TOUSSAINT
AND PRINCE ALBERT (BROTHER OF THE KING) WILL BE ARRIVING
IN CHINA TO GRACE OPENING OF A BELGIAN TRADE EXHIBITION.
TINDEMANS AND VAN ELSLANDE ARE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN
PEKING APRIL 20 FOR A ONE-WEEK VISIT TO CHINA (REFTEL).

4. TINDEMANS' TRIPS TO POLAND AND CHINA MAKE ALMOST
INEVITABLE, ACCORDING TO FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES, A FINAL
GO-AHEAD ON STATE VISIT BY KING BAUDOUIN AND QUEEN FABIOLA
TO U.S.S.R. IN LATE SUMMER. INVITATION TO BAUDOUIN WAS
EXTENDED BY PODGORNYY WHEN THE TWO MET AT IRAN ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION THREE YEARS AGO. EVER SINCE, SOVIETS HAVE
BEEN LEANING ON KING TO SET A DATE. TWICE IN 1974
TENTATIVE ARRIVAL DATES WERE SET AND THEN SCRUBBED. KING
WANTS TO GO, AND FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES CONCEDE THEY
HAVE ABOUT RUN OUT OF EXCUSES FOR DELAY. NEVERTHELESS,
GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET FIRMALLY OKAYED KING'S VISIT TO
SOVIET UNION, WHICH WOULD BE ONLY SECOND (AFTER DANISH
QUEEN'S UPCOMING VISIT) BY A REIGNING MONARCH
TO RUSSIA SINCE REVOLUTION.

COMMENT: FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHEF DE CABINET (VAN BELLINGHEN)
STRESSED TO US THAT NONE OF UPCOMING TRIPS EAST ORIGINATED
FROM BELGIAN INITIATIVE. HE SAID MINISTRY DOES NOT REGARD
THEM AS OPPORTUNE NOW. HE SAID MINISTRY WOULD PREFER
TO HAVE TWO IMPORTANT MATTERS - SELECTION OF A F-104
REPLACEMENT AND CONCLUSION OF CSCE - SETTLED BEFORE
OFFERING SOVIETS, ET AL A CHANCE TO COMPLICATE DECISION-
MAKING HERE BY BEATING DETENTE DRUMS ON PRIME BRUSSELS
TV TIME. FIRESTONE

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